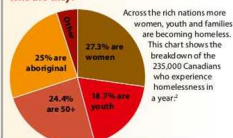


Homelessness – The Facts

How many?

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Who are they?



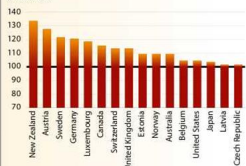
Why are they homeless?

Homelessness has complex roots. This chart illustrates the main reasons in Australia.¹



Unaffordable housing

House Price-to-Income Ratio (2016, 2010-100)
House prices are growing faster than incomes in many countries. If we use 2010 as the base year house prices in 2016 outstripped incomes by 35% in New Zealand, 15% in the UK and almost 10% in Australia.



- For 70% of the world's city dwellers the median house price is 5 times the annual household income, well above the recommended ratio of 3 times. Just 13% of global cities have affordable housing of any kind.²
- From 2002-12 a typical London, UK home sold for 7 times the city's average annual salary. Today the figure is 12 times.³
- 1 in 5 renter households in Canada pay more than 50% of their income on rent.⁴
- 1 in 4 families in the US spend over 70% of their income on rent and utilities.⁵
- There are 33,000 people on the waiting list for public housing in the Australian state of Victoria. Less than 1% of private rental properties in and around Melbourne are affordable for single parents on low incomes.⁶

Shelter saves money

- In Canada, every \$10 spent on housing and support for the chronically homeless results in \$21.72 in savings on healthcare, social supports, housing and the criminal justice system.⁷
- An Australian study found that preventing young people from becoming homeless by strengthening school and youth services at a community level could save \$400 million a year.⁸
- The Central Florida Commission on Homelessness found the state spends \$31,000 a year on each chronically homeless person. The cost of providing each of them with permanent housing, job training and healthcare was \$10,000 a year.⁹

1 UN Human Settlements Programme, *urbanisation*
2 The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016, *en.87*
3 UN-Habitat, *World Urbanisation Prospects*, *en.87*
4 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
5 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
6 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
7 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
8 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
9 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*

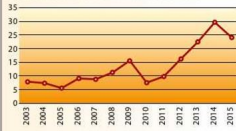
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- Homeless people are 2-5 times more likely to die prematurely than the general population.
- Rates of tuberculosis infection are 20 times higher; rates of depression are 7 times higher.
- In Britain the homeless are 4 times more likely to use emergency hospital services at a cost of about £85 million (\$106 m) a year.
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Violence, disasters & development

In 2015, 27.8 million people in 127 countries were forced to flee their homes because of conflict, violence and disasters – more than the total populations of New York, London, Paris and Cairo combined.¹¹

Newly displaced persons per minute, 2003 - 2015



- 75% of the world's internally displaced people – 30 million – are located in just 10 countries – including Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan.
- Disasters displaced 19.2 million people in 113 countries in 2015. Over the past 5 years 203.4 million people fled their homes due to natural disasters.
- 15 million people a year since the mid-2000s have been forced out of their homes by development schemes such as dams, urban renewal projects and mega-sporting events.

Race

- Native Canadians are 10 times more likely than non-indigenous to end up in an emergency shelter. Nearly 1 in 3 native people who live off reserve are homeless.¹²
- African Americans make up 12% of the US population but nearly 40% of the people in homeless shelters.
- About 1 in 5 Black women renters in the US are evicted at some point in their lives. For white women the figure is 1 in 15.¹³
- Aboriginal people have 14 times the rate of homelessness of non-indigenous Australians.¹⁴

10 Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2014, *40 Years On: The 1974 NHC Charter*
11 The cost of youth homelessness in Australia, 2016, *en.87*
12 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
13 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*
14 *2016-17 A.D. Housing*, *en.87*

Women

- Women fleeing violence, often accompanied by children, are a significant part of the hidden homeless, often moving between home, shelters and friends or relatives.
- 40-50% of homeless people are women and nearly 60% of people seeking specialist homelessness services are female.¹⁵
- More than 90% of homeless women have suffered physical or sexual abuse: escaping that abuse is a leading cause of their homelessness.¹⁶
- Homeless women between 18-44 are 10 times more likely to die prematurely than women the same age in the general population.¹⁷

Youth

- Homeless youth make up a growing portion of the homeless. Children living on the streets are especially vulnerable to victimization, exploitation and abuse.
- 19 million teens are homeless each year in the US. In the UK over 83,000 youth were homeless in 2014, while in Canada 35,000 youth are homeless annually.¹⁸
- Half of homeless kids are from middle and upper income families. On average they leave home at age 15. More than 70% have suffered some form of abuse.¹⁹
- There are an estimated 150 million street kids in India.
- In the US, UK and Canada 20-40% of homeless teens identify as LGBT.²⁰

NEW INTERNATIONALIST • JUNE 2017 • 19

New Internationalist

The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for global justice

Homelessness

New Internationalist Easier English
Ready Intermediate Lesson

This lesson:

Reading / speaking

Reading / speaking:
quiz and infographic

Reading / speaking

Reading / speaking:
prediction from titles
and photos

Reading / speaking

Reading / speaking:
read 6 x short articles
and compare

Speaking / writing

Speaking / writing:
plan a housing project
in a group

QUIZ:

1. How many people in the world have no home?:

a) more than 10 million b) more than 100 million c) more than 1 billion

2. What's the reason for most homelessness in Australia?:

a) health reasons b) money problems c) problems from domestic violence and relationships

3. In which countries are house prices growing faster in relation to income?:

a) New Zealand, Austria and Germany b) UK, UK and Japan c) Norway, Austria and Switzerland

4. In 2015, how many people in how many countries had to leave their homes because of conflict, violence or disaster?:

a) 2.7 million in 82 countries b) 27.8 million in 127 countries c) 279 million in 53 countries

5. How many people have to leave their homes every year because of development eg. dams or big sports events?:

a) 1.5 million b) 15 million c) 150 million

6. What percentage of homeless teenagers in the US, UK and Canada say they are LGBT+?:

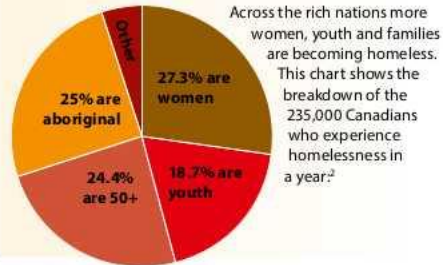
a) 10 - 20% b) 20 - 40% c) 40 - 60% (now check on the infographic >>>)

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Why are they homeless?

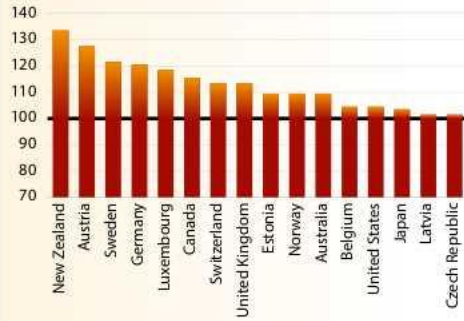
Homelessness has complex roots. This chart illustrates the main reasons in Australia.³



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imf.org/external/research/housing/

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1 UN Human Settlements Programme, unhabitat.org
 2 The State of Homelessness in Canada 2016, n.in.8/
 HCan2016 3 Australian Broadcasting Association, n.in.1/
 Hvic2016 4 UN-Habitat, n.in.13/housing 5 'Hot in the city',
 2 April 2016, The Economist 6 Beyond Housing First, a holistic
 response to family homelessness in Canada, 2015, n.in.1/BHf-
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 the American City, 2016 8 Justice Connect, 'Keeping Women
 and Children Housed', 2017, n.in.1/JC-house

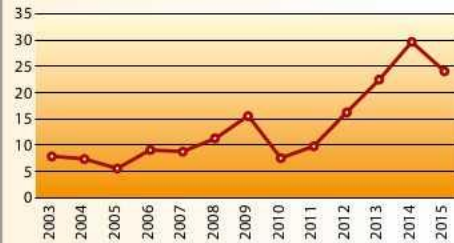
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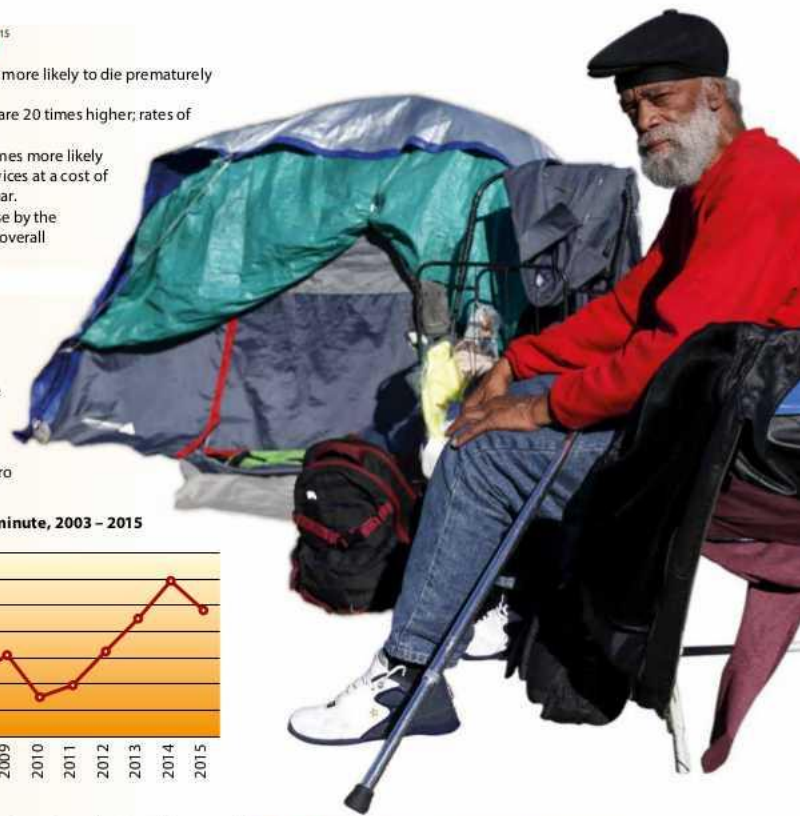
Source: UNHCR

- 75% of the world's internally displaced people – 30 million – are located in just 10 countries – including Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Sudan and South Sudan.
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9 Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2014, At Home/chez Soi, 2014, MHCCat-home
 10 The cost of youth homelessness in Australia, 2016, missionaustralia.com.au
 11 National Shelter Study 2005-2014, n.in.1/GovCanNSS 12 Desmond, see 7. 13 Australian
 Government, n.in.1/AHW-iA 14 IDMC, 2016, n.in.1/IDMCgrid 15 'The health of homeless
 people in high-income countries', The Lancet, October 2014, n.in.1/health-hope
 16 Homelessness Australia, 2013, HA-2013 17 National Law Center on Homelessness and
 Poverty, n.in.1/hcp.org 18 'Risk of Death Among Homeless Women', homeless.shub.ca
 19 Ending Youth Homelessness: A human rights guide, n.in.1/youth-rights
 20 Covenant House Toronto, n.in.1/cohort



Shutterstock/Readers

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Before you read these 7 short articles, which stories match the 3 pictures?:

1/ Sri Lanka: 50,000 Houses for War Survivors

2/ Canada: The RAFT

3/ Australia: Geelong Project

4/ Jordan: Urban Shelter Project

5/ Britain: Stonewall Housing

6/ Building and Social Housing Foundation

7/ Chile: The Resilient Social Housing Project



What do you think these groups and organizations do and who do they help, and why?

1/ Sri Lanka: 50,000 Houses for War Survivors

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Now find out from the 6 articles:

1/ What does the group / organisation do?

2/ Who does the group / organisation help?

3/ Why?

Choice of how to do this:

There are 6 articles, so:

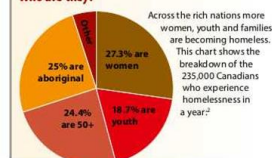
- *all students can read all 6, or*
- *6 students can read 1 each and compare afterwards, or*
- *students, in groups of 3, can read 2 articles each and compare afterwards*

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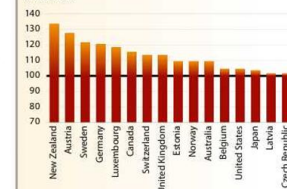
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inf.org/external/research/housing/

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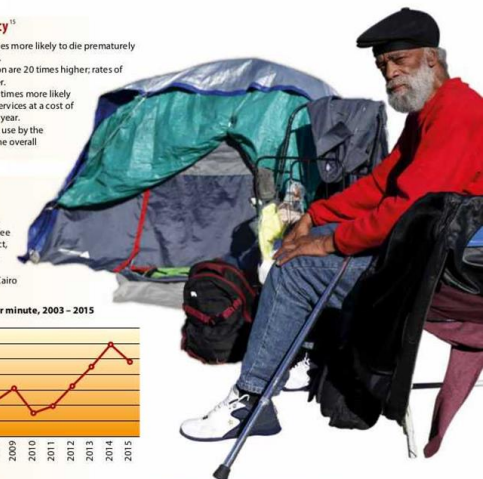


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Sri Lanka: 50,000 Houses for War Survivors

The 26-year civil war in Sri Lanka finally ended in 2009. Tens of thousands of families were living in refugee camps. They wanted to go back to the land they had owned before the war. But the war destroyed community life, relationships and houses. When people went home, they lived in simple shelters often with no electricity or other services.

So the Indian government offered to help (probably because millions of Tamils lived in southern India). They started the '50,000 Houses' project in 2012. They gave \$240 million to development programmes and to help people build their own houses. They aim to help get 50,000 houses for 225,000 people. So far 45,200 houses are complete.

This self-help approach started more similar projects. Owners control the building, not building companies. The government gave money to many families to build. People became more confident because they could make their own decisions and manage the money. They have built good quality houses quickly, and they now have more confidence to face other challenges.

Many other groups helped: UN-Habitat, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Habitat for Humanity and Sri Lanka's National Housing Development Authority.

Canada: The RAFT

The Raft is a drop-in centre and hostel for homeless young people in St Catharines, Ontario. This is a small town in area that grows fruit, 20 minutes by car from Niagara Falls. The Raft has supported thousands of young people, providing programmes and resources, and helping them to become independent.

The centre started in 1994 after a group of people from all religions agreed that there was not enough help for homeless young people.

The money comes from community groups, churches and individual people. The RAFT began as a centre for young people to drop in five nights a week. Now it is also a hostel with 16 beds hostel and many other community youth projects.

They want to help young people take control of their lives, to build confidence and get young people involved in their community.



Australia: Geelong Project

Many different groups are working together on the Geelong Project: groups working on homelessness, youth justice, family violence, mental health, disability, education, employment, recreation, cultural diversity and aboriginal services.

If they see a problem early, it is easier to help. And they will be able to reduce homelessness and the related social, emotional and health problems. To find the problems earlier, they need to find out about problems like: family conflict, mental health issues, unemployment, poverty, alcohol or drug issues and crime. And they also need to work on creating stronger protection in the community and in family relationships.

Early help can be early in the life of a child or early in the life of a problem. In both cases, they can help stop, or reduce, many of the problems related to homelessness. One of the challenges is to decide when to act and how to do it well. But one thing is clear: families are very important.



Jordan: Urban Shelter Project

This project works with people who own buildings in Jordan. They work on buildings that people cannot live in to create homes. Then they let Syrian refugees live there, paying no rent for 18 months. The money is used to help prepare the buildings. This helps the local economy because it gives local people jobs. It also, of course, helps with housing. More than 5,000 housing units have been improved. This has given housing to more than 18,000 refugees and created more than 20,000 short-term jobs.

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) gives money to help with the building work. The NRC also provides legal aid to Syrian refugees to help them with documents, refugee registration, and housing, land and property rights. The project has really helped the local economy with more than \$10 million in new investment. They are still raising more money to work on other buildings.



Britain: Stonewall Housing

Since 1983 Stonewall Housing has provided housing advice, legal help and support for LGBT+ people. People often discriminate against them when they try to find housing they have enough money for. Stonewall makes people think and creates change so everyone can get equal help from services. Stonewall helps people who suffer from two types of discrimination, for example LGBT+ refugees and migrants.

They run a free, confidential housing advice helpline; drop-in housing advice workshops; specialist and awareness training for people who work with and live in social housing; information to other agencies about housing for LGBT+ people; and fighting for their housing rights. Stonewall Housing wants to make sure that people live in safer homes, with no fear, where they can celebrate their identity and support each other. Their projects work with social inequalities, and help people to be involved in society.

Stonewall Housing has started many very good projects, for example one against Forced Marriage, ROAR (a project on domestic abuse) and Finding Safe Spaces (to help people who sleep on the streets).



Chile: The Resilient Social Housing Project

The 2010 earthquake and tsunami destroyed more than 11,000 homes and other buildings on the Chilean coast. It destroyed communities and people's lives and jobs. The original plan was to move people quickly into new housing away from the sea. But local communities did not want this. They wanted to stay where they were and to continue their traditional lifestyle of fishing and collecting algae.

So the Chilean government started this project. They asked local people whose houses had been destroyed for ideas. And as a result, they build 180 'stilt houses' in 5 villages. They designed the new houses to survive natural disasters. They can survive earthquakes and, if there is a tsunami in future, people will be able to repair them quickly.

The Chilean government Ministry of Housing and Urban Development gave the money – about \$25,000 for each house. So the people could buy the houses with no debt. The people who live there need to look after the houses, but this is much easier because they can still work and earn money from the sea.

This new way of organising social housing in Chile should become a model for new social housing projects across the country.



Create your own housing project

In small groups:

a) Decide:

- Who you would like to help
- Where
- Why

b) Put the information on a poster

c) All groups present the projects and decide which is best and why



Follow-up:

Read one or all of these Easier English articles:

The problem of finding a home in the West

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/The_problem_of_finding_a_home_in_the_West

How do you stop the cycle of homelessness

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/How_do_you_stop_the_cycle_of_homelessness%3F

Escape to the street

https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Escape_to_the_street

